

About City of Cambridge, Massachusetts Land Use Parcel Shapefile

8/29/14

This data set derives from several sources. The primary source is a data dump from the VISION assessing data system, which provides data up to date as of January 1, 2012. Use codes provided by this system combine aspects of land use, tax status, and condominium status. In an effort to clarify land use type the data has been cleaned and subdivided to break the original use code into several different fields. The data set has further been supplemented with development information provided by building permits issued by the Inspectional Services Department and from data found in the Development Log publication. Land use status is up to date as of July 1, 2014.

Data Fields

- **Location:** In the great majority of cases this is the street address of the parcel as it is recorded in the Registry of Deed record. In instances where edits were made to the base parcel layer the best address available at the time is employed.
- **ML (as well as map & lot fields):** This a unique parcel identifier found in the deed and used by the Assessing data system. In a few cases, where parcels have been subdivided subsequent to January 1, 2012, a placeholder Map-Lot number is assigned that differs from that used elsewhere.
- **Land Area:** These figures indicate the physical area of the parcel. In instances where the area reported by the Assessing data system differed from the area reported by the Cambridge GIS system by more than 10% an effort was made to reconcile sources and correct errors.
- **LU Code:** The four digit text string in this field indicates the primary usage of a parcel. While the codes are based on the standard Massachusetts assessing land use classification system, they differ in a number of cases; *the coding system used here is unique to this data set*. Note that other minor uses may occur on a property and, in some cases, tenants may introduce additional uses not reflected here (eg, office space used as a medical office, home based businesses).
- **Category:** This broader grouping of land uses can be used to map land use data. You can find the land use data mapped at:

http://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/Maps/Landuse/cddmap_landuse_20140701.askhx

- **LUDesc:** The short description gives more detail about the specific use indicated by the Land Use Code. Most descriptions are taken from the standard Massachusetts assessing land use classification system.
- **MixedUseTY:** Two flags are used for this field. “Groundfloor” indicates that a commercial use is found on the ground floor of the primary building, and upper floors are used for residential purposes. “Mixed” indicates that two or more uses are found throughout the structure or multiple structures on the parcel, one of which is residential.
- **ExistUnits:** This value indicates the number of existing residential units as of July 1, 2014. A residential unit may be a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied (or, if vacant, intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. This includes units found in apartment style graduate student housing residences and rooms in assisted living facilities and boarding houses are treated as also housing units. The unit count does not include college or graduate student dormitories, nursing home rooms, group homes, or other group quarters living arrangements.
 - **GQLodgingH:** A value of “Yes” indicates that the primary use of the property is as a group quarters living arrangement. Group quarters are a place where people live or stay, in a group living arrangement, that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. Group quarters include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and workers’ dormitories.

Most university dormitories are included under the broader higher education land use code, as most dormitories are included in the larger parcels comprising the bulk of higher education campuses.

- **GradStudent:** A value of “Yes” indicates the parcel is used to house graduate students in apartment style units. Graduate student dormitories are treated as a higher education land use.
- **CondoFlag:** “Yes” indicates that the parcel is owned as a condominium. Condo properties can include one or more uses, including residential, commercial, and parking. The great majority of such properties in Cambridge are residential only.
- **Tax Status:** A value indicates that the parcel is not subject to local property taxes. The following general rules are employed to assign properties to subcategories, though special situations exist in a number of cases.
 - **Authority:** Properties owned the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority and Cambridge Housing Authority.

- **City:** Properties owned by the City of Cambridge or cemetery land owned by the Town of Belmont.
- **Educ:** Includes properties used for education purposes, ranging from pre-schools to university research facilities. (More detail about the level of education can be found using the Land Use Code.)
- **Federal:** Properties owned by the federal government, including the Post Office. Certain properties with assessing data indicating Cambridge Redevelopment Authority ownership are in fact owned by the federal government as part of the Volpe Transportation Research Center and are so treated here.
- **Other:** Nontaxable properties owned by a nonprofit organization and not falling within one of the other categories.
- **Religious:** Properties owned by religious organizations. Parochial schools located on separate parcels from other uses are included in the Educ Nontax category.
- **State:** Properties owned by the State of Massachusetts, including those owned by the MBTA, Middlesex County and DCR parklands.

Differences From “Official” Parcel Layer

The Cambridge GIS system maintains a separate layer of land parcels reflecting up to date subdivision and ownership. The parcel data associated with the Land Use Data set differs from the “official” parcel layer in a number of cases. For that reason a separate parcel layer is provided to work with land use data in a GIS environment. The parcel shapefile can be found here for download:

<https://data.cambridgema.gov/dataset/Land-Use-Parcels/nswm-bizi>

Table of Land Use Codes

The following table lists all land use code found in the data layer:

Land Use Code	Land Use Description	Category
0101	MXD SNGL-FAM-RE	Mixed Use Residential
0104	MXD TWO-FAM-RES	Mixed Use Residential
0105	MXD THREE-FM-RE	Mixed Use Residential
0111	MXD 4-8-UNIT-AP	Mixed Use Residential
0112	MXD >8-UNIT-APT	Mixed Use Residential
0121	MXD BOARDING-HS	Mixed Use Residential
013	MULTIUSE-RES	Mixed Use Residential
031	MULTIUSE-COM	Mixed Use Commercial
041	MULTIUSE-IND	Mixed Use Industrial
0942	Higher Ed and Comm Mixed	Mixed Use Education
101	SNGL-FAM-RES	Residential
1014	SINGLE FAM W/AU	Residential
104	TWO-FAM-RES	Residential
105	THREE-FM-RES	Residential
106	RES-LAND-IMP	Transportation
1067	RES-COV-PKG	Transportation
111	4-8-UNIT-APT	Residential
112	>8-UNIT-APT	Residential
113	ASSISTED-LIV	Assisted Living/Boarding House
121	BOARDING-HSE	Assisted Living/Boarding House
130	RES-DEV-LAND	Vacant Residential
131	RES-PDV-LAND	Vacant Residential
132	RES-UDV-LAND	Vacant Residential
1322	RES-UDV-PARK (OS) LN	Vacant Residential
140	CHILD-CARE	Commercial
300	HOTEL	Commercial
302	INN-RESORT	Commercial
304	NURSING-HOME	Health
316	WAREHOUSE	Commercial
323	SH-CNTR/MALL	Commercial
324	SUPERMARKET	Commercial
325	RETAIL-STORE	Commercial
326	EATING-ESTBL	Commercial
327	RETAIL-CONDO	Commercial
330	AUTO-SALES	Commercial
331	AUTO-SUPPLY	Commercial
332	AUTO-REPAIR	Commercial
334	GAS-STATION	Commercial

Land Use Code	Land Use Description	Category
335	CAR-WASH	Commercial
336	PARKING-GAR	Transportation
337	PARKING-LOT	Transportation
340	GEN-OFFICE	Office
341	BANK	Commercial
342	MEDICAL-OFFC	Health
343	OFFICE-CONDO	Office
345	RETAIL-OFFIC	Office
346	INV-OFFICE	Office
353	FRAT-ORGANIZ	Commercial
362	THEATRE	Commercial
370	BOWLING-ALLY	Commercial
375	TENNIS-CLUB	Commercial
390	COM-DEV-LAND	Vacant Commercial
391	COM-PDV-LAND	Vacant Commercial
392	COM-UDV-LAND	Vacant Commercial
3922	CRMCL REC LND	Vacant Commercial
400	MANUFACTURNG	Industrial
401	WAREHOUSE	Industrial
404	RES-&-DEV-FC	Office/R&D
406	HIGH-TECH	Office/R&D
407	CLEAN-MANUF	Industrial
409	INDUST-CONDO	Industrial
413	RESRCH IND CND	Industrial
422	ELEC GEN PLANT	Utility
424	PUB UTIL REG	Utility
428	GAS-CONTROL	Utility
430	TELE-EXCH-STA	Utility
440	IND-DEV-LAND	Vacant Industrial
442	IND-UDV-LAND	Vacant Industrial
920	Parklands	Public Open Space
930	Government Operations	Government Operations
934	Public Schools	Education
940	Private Pre & Elem School	Education
941	Private Secondary School	Education
942	Private College	Higher Education
9421	Private College Res Units	Education Residential
943	Other Educ & Research Org	Higher Education

Land Use Code	Land Use Description	Category
953	Cemeteries	Cemetery
955	Hospitals & Medical Offic	Health
956	Museums	Higher Education
957	Charitable Services	Charitable/Religious
960	Religious	Charitable/Religious
971	Water Utility	Utility
972	Road Right of Way	Transportation
975	MBTA/Railroad	Transportation
9751	MBTA/Railroad	Transportation
995	Private Open Space	Privately-Owned Open Space

For More Information

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